

LRD Opinion Tracker – Railpark West LRD Russell Environmental and Sustainability Services Limited

LRD Opinion Item	LRD Response
<p>1. The NIS is required to examine in detail the significant landscape level ecological and hydrological impacts that may arise from the cumulative impact of the largescale proposed changes in the Railpark town land ecology and landscape which will ensue as a result from the previously granted and integral MERR road development and other proposed large residential developments in the Railpark Townland which will entail a highly significant landscape level change to the ecology of this area. Large scale changes to local hydrology and flood regimes may impact the Rye Water Valley and Carton SAC in particular over and above the impact form the site development on its own, this will need to assessed in more detail.</p>	<p>Cumulative impacts have been considered in NIS, p23. As per the engineering reports, all surface water for the development will be attenuated on the site, thus having no impact on the local hydrology. The two other large developments in the vicinity Planning References P82019-08 and 2561119, have appropriate mitigation measures to protect the integrity of the Rye Water Valley/Carton SAC and the hydrology of the two sites have been fully considered in the EIAR reports. Furthermore, all of the developments are outside of the flood zone, even that of low probability (1 in 1000). Site specific mitigation measures have been included in the NIS and CEMP to protect both ground and surface water during construction</p>
<p>1. The EclA outlines the possible removal of areas of hedgerow and mention 4 hedgerows with 3 for full removal and 1 to have mature trees removed (labelled H3 H4 and H5 with tree removal from H2). However, the actual length of hedgerow to be lost is not quantified exactly in the EclA and it is unclear if any further areas of this habitat will be compromised as part of the works on site. The applicants attention is drawn to policy BI P6 and objectives BI 026, and BI O27 of</p>	<p>The lengths of hedgerow removal involves the removal of one full hedgerow and one partial, poor-quality hedgerow. See EclA p 18 and p27 and BAP pp17 – 18. Approximately 120m of hedgerow will be removed for the proposed development compared with the creation of 352m native hedgerows (BAP). The landscape plan proposed new native hedgerows.</p>

the KCDP, it is recommended that in the first instance that more existing hedgerow is retained on site and then a clear quantum amount of hedgerow proposed to be removed from the site and the potential ecological impact of this loss.

2. An assessment of the cumulative impact loss at the site in tandem with the loss of hedgerow from the previously granted and integral MERR road development and other proposed large residential developments in the Railpark Townland which will entail a highly significant landscape level change to the ecology of this area.
3. A revised landscape plan is needed to reflect the additional hedgerow and the need to ensure functional ecological corridors linking to the surrounding landscape where possible. This review and reappraisal may assist the applicant to comply with the KCC policy BI P6.
4. It is recommended that the majority of tree and shrub species to be planted on site should be of native provenance and these should be included in the Landscape Plan.

To ensure the successful implementation of the Landscape Plan and support Objective LR O82 of the KCDP, it is crucial to focus on planting native tree and shrub species of Irish provenance. Certification of Irish provenance should be included in the Landscape Plan for all native species used on site.

Additionally, it is important to avoid planting any species recognized as invasive or potentially invasive. The following details the Schedule of Invasive Species in Ireland, which are forbidden to be planted, and

The Biodiversity Action Plan maps out all of the biodiversity enhancement measures.

All of the proposed trees to be planted are either native or pollinator friendly species. Similarly all planting of shrubs and hedgerow species are either native and/or pollinator friendly in accordance with the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

The overall landscape proposal will provide additional native habitats, in particular the detention basins, wildflower meadow areas and new hedgerows.

Further details of the biodiversity enhancement measures are included in the Biodiversity Action Plan.

No invasive species will be planted as part of the landscape Plan or Biodiversity Action Plan.

<p>highlights potentially invasive species such as cherry laurel.</p> <p>Schedule of Invasive Species in Ireland</p> <p><u>Forbidden Species</u></p> <p>The following species are listed under the Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Regulations 2024 and are prohibited from being planted, dispersed, or allowed to grow in Ireland :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Japanese Knotweed (<i>Fallopia japonica</i>). • Giant Hogweed (<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>). • Himalayan Balsam (<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>). • Rhododendron (<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>). • Giant Rhubarb (<i>Gunnera tinctoria</i>). <p><u>Potentially Invasive Species</u></p> <p>These species are not currently listed as forbidden but are recognized as potentially invasive and should be avoided in all landscaping projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cherry Laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>). • Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>). • Butterfly Bush (<i>Buddleja davidil</i>). • Montbretia (<i>Crocsmia x crocosmiiiflora</i>). 	
<p>5. The ecologist should provide additional guidance on avoiding light spill onto suitable foraging and commuting routes for bats, and for other nocturnal animals. The KCC ecologist wishes to remind the applicant of the guidance provided in the Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting (BCT and Institute of Lighting Professionals 2023), which should be adhered to as is accepted good practice.</p>	<p>Specifications for bat sensitive lighting submitted to and applied by the lighting engineer. EclA p23.</p>

<p>6. A standalone biodiversity plan and a plan to optimize areas of nature within the development are required for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Sustainability: Biodiversity plans help ensure that the development supports local ecosystems, promoting the conservation of native species and habitats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced Quality of Life: Access to natural areas and green spaces improves residents' mental and physical well-being 	<p>Biodiversity Action Plan prepared</p>
<p>7. The scale and size of this development also assessment should also demonstrate clearly how objective BI 01 of the Kildare County Development Plan 2023 to 2029 to <i>increase biodiversity within the proposed development</i> would occur. It is therefore recommended that in tandem with the site landscape plan, a post-development Biodiversity Plan be prepared as a standalone report to support this application.</p>	<p>Details within the BAP</p>